

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03
TRSE-00 /066 W

-----121419Z 036976 /43

O 121343Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5679

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJECT: MAPAM VOTES TO REMAIN N ALIGNMENT

REF: TEL AVIV 2514

1. AFTER A DAY-LONG DEBATE AND MUCH SOUL-SEARCHING MAPAM'S
CENTRAL COMMITTEE VOTED LAST NIGHT TO REMAIN IN THE
ALIGNMENT. THE SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION, ADOPTED BY A
VOTE OF 159 TO 115, TOOK NOTE OF THE LABOR PARTY'S
ASSURANCES THAT IT WILL AVOID THE FORMATION OF A
GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY, DEVOTE SETTLEMENT EFFORTS
TO GALILEE, THE NEGEV, THE JERUSALEM AREA AND THE RAFAH
APPROACHES, AND PREVENT UNAUTHORIZED SETTLEMENT. THE
RESOLUTION ALSO REFERRED TO THE LABOR PARTY'S PROMISES
CONCERNING FULL EMPLOYMENT, THE HARNESSING OF INFLATION,
A JUST DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL INCOME, AND, FINALLY,
MAPAM'S FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE FORMING OF POLITICAL
AND ECONOMIC DECISIONS AS WELL AS ITS APPROPRIATE
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REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE HISTADRUT.
IT WAS DECIDED THAT SIX MONTHS AFTER THE FORMATION OF
THE NEXT GOVERNMENT (PRESUMABLY ASSUMING THAT IT WILL
BE HEADED BY THE ALIGNMENT) MAPAM WILL RECONSIDER
WHETHER TO REMAIN IN THE ALIGNMENT BASED ON THE LABOR
PARTY'S RECORD OF IMPLEMENTING THE ABOVE PROMISES.

2. COMMENT: THE DECISION WAS AGONIZING AND WAS MADE AFTER SEVERAL SPEAKERS WARNED THAT RUNNING ALONE MAPAM WOULD FARE BADLY IN THE MAY 17 ELECTION, IN PARTICULAR BECAUSE THERE WAS SO LITTLE TIME TO ORGANIZE AN INDEPENDENT CAMPAIGN. PERHAPS THE MOST PERSUASIVE FACTOR WAS THE "SPECTER" OF PRESIDENT KATZIR TURNING TO MENACHEM BEGIN TO FORM THE GOVERNMENT IF IN MAY THE LIKUD NOSED OUT THE LABOR PARTY MINUS MAPAM. MOREOVER, PERES MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION IN HIS APPEARANCE BEFORE THE MAPAM LEADERSHIP (REFTEL) AND MANY HAVE COME TO BELIEVE THAT HIS "HAWKISH TENDENCIES" WILL BE HELD IN CHECK BY ALLON AND EBAN.

3. MAPAM, NONETHELESS, REMAINS A DIVIDED PARTY. THERE HAS LONG BEEN A STRONG MINORITY THAT FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASONS WANTED TO END THE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LABOR PARTY. THIS MINORITY IS NOW LARGER AND STRONGER. FOLLOWING THE VOTE, MANY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXPRESSED THEIR INTENTION TO REMAIN PASSIVE IN THE FORTHCOMING CAMPAIGN. A NUMBER OF YOUNG KIBBUTZNIKS WHO HAD SUPPORTED DISSOLUTION WERE HEARD TO COMPLAIN THAT THEY WILL BE UNABLE TO JUSTIFY THE DECISION TO "THEIR KIBBUTZIM."

4. ONCE AGAIN, MAPAM HAS BACKED AWAY FROM THE BRINK. THE COMMITMENT TO AN AFTER-SIX-MONTHS REVIEW APPEARS A SOP TO THE DISSENTERS MORE THAN A GUN AT LABOR'S HEAD. PERES AND THE LABOR PARTY CAN TAKE SATISFACTION IN MAPAM'S DECISION, WHICH NEARLY COMPLETES THE PICTURE

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OF A SMOOTH AND LOGICAL TRANSFER OF ALIGNMENT LEADERSHIP. HAD MAPAM DISSOLVED THE ALIGNMENT, THE LABOR PARTY WOULD HAVE BEEN VIEWED AS HAVING MOVED TO THE RIGHT UNDER PERES. AS IT IS, WITH THE ALIGNMENT INTACT AND WITH ALLON AND EBAN IN SECOND AND THIRD PLACES, THE BURDEN OF PROOF FALLS ON THOSE WHO PREDICT A HARDER LINE RESULTING FROM THE RABIN RESIGNATION. AND AFTER ALL, SIX MONTHS SEEMS A LONG TIME OFF WHEN YOU ARE FACING AN ELECTION IN FIVE WEEKS.

DUNNIGAN

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